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General and complete disarmament

Relationship between disarmament and development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Given the financial constraints of the Organization and the limited response by Member States to support action for the implementation of the action programme adopted at the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, the Organization was able to undertake only an attenuated programme of activities in this connection.

The Secretary-General therefore proposes that Member States consider the establishment of a group of governmental experts to undertake a review of the relationship between disarmament and development in the current international context as well as the future role of the Organization in this connection.

* A/57/50/Rev.1.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 56/24 E of 29 November 2001, entitled "Relationship between disarmament and development". In that resolution, the General Assembly invited all Member States to communicate their views and proposals for the implementation of the action programme adopted at the 1987 International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, as well as any other views and proposals with a view to achieving the goals of the action programme, within the framework of current international relations. It requested the Secretary-General to continue to take action, through appropriate organs and within available resources, for the implementation of the action programme adopted at the International Conference and to report to the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session.

II. Action taken

2. The Department for Disarmament Affairs organized a symposium on 29 April 2002 at United Nations Headquarters entitled "Disarmament and Development: New Choices for Security and Prosperity". The panellists were drawn from the Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research at Rutgers University.[1] The issues discussed covered the following topics: the positive impact of the settlement of disputes between States, particularly border disputes, on the development prospects of the societies concerned; competing pressures on scarce resources for military expenditures and economic development; significant developments towards military transparency between States, particularly the development of a common standardized methodology for the measurement of recent defence spending by Argentina and Chile; the need for greater transparency of military expenditures by States in order to assess their economic and budgetary policies and the role of the International Monetary Fund; and issues of defence conversion and, in this context, an assessment of some case studies of defence industry restructuring.

3. In addition, the Department for Disarmament Affairs engaged in informal consultations with interested Member States on issues of disarmament and development that may be relevant in the context of the preparatory process leading up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held from 26 August to 4 September 2002 in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Department also contributed an informal paper on the relationship between the global arms trade and corruption to the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention in November 2001, in the context of an informal preparatory meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee for the Negotiation of a Convention against Corruption.

III. Recommendation: proposal for future action

4. The financial constraints of the Organization continued to restrict the scope of activities undertaken by the Department for Disarmament Affairs and other departments and agencies represented in the high-level Steering Group on Disarmament and Development, established by the Secretary-General in May 1999. Member States also continued to show limited interest in communicating their views and proposals, as well as providing assistance to the Organization, to help promote the achievement of the goals of the 1987 action programme, within the framework of current international relations.

5. **The Secretary-General therefore proposes that Member States consider the establishment of a group of governmental experts to undertake a reappraisal of the relationship between disarmament and development in the current international context, as well as the future role of the Organization in this connection. Such a reappraisal would enable a review of the 1987 action programme taking into account the changes in international relations since its adoption.**

IV. Information received from Governments

6. Information received from Governments is set out below.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

[Original: English]
[29 April 2002]

1. What now merits the serious concern of the world is that the Bush Administration has increased military expenditure to a level that exceeds that of the Reagan Administration during the cold-war era. This is entirely attributable to the unilateral and self-opinionated foreign policy of the present Administration of the United States of America.

2. At present, excessive United States military outlays are stifling economic growth, adversely affecting international development and igniting a new arms race, inconsistent with the fundamental principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter.

3. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea wishes to reiterate its position that resources released through disarmament and arms reduction should be diverted to the economic and social development of all countries, and especially of the developing countries.

4. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea also calls upon the international community to exert efforts to advance the plan of people-centred development.

Ecuador

[Original: Spanish]
[21 June 2002]

Ecuador, aware that the action programme adopted by the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development is a positive and necessary strategy for guaranteeing security and peaceful coexistence among peoples, supports and implements it, within the scope of its competence and budgetary resources. The action programme constitutes a reference point that contributes to a better understanding of disarmament at the global level, and it is unquestionably a useful tool for the development of national policies and for the implementation of decisions and actions at the domestic level. In order to improve the implementation of the action programme, it would be appropriate to increase allocations and resources within the United Nations budget for national campaigns and strategies aimed at promoting disarmament, and to transform such resources and efforts into campaigns for disarmament and poverty eradication, especially in the least advantaged countries.

El Salvador

[Original: Spanish]
[29 April 2002]

The Government of El Salvador considers that because this issue is addressed in the Framework Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America, prompt compliance is needed. It also believes that the programme should be broadened to include the commitments made at the Millennium Summit and what was agreed in the Monterrey Consensus, the final outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development.

Panama

[Original: Spanish]
[19 April 2002]

1. The Republic of Panama considers it of the utmost importance that in the action programme special emphasis is placed on all efforts aimed at heightening the international community's awareness of the importance of the development of human security within the context of international security, when traditionally, greater emphasis has been placed on the security of States. As this can be achieved only through education, Panama suggests that local, regional and international meetings be held on a more regular basis. It also suggests that a course entitled "Disarmament and development" be included in the general studies curricula of all Member States.

2. It is suggested that studies be conducted, and that the findings thereof be subsequently disseminated to Member States, on mechanisms that could be used by countries, especially developing countries whose military troops, owing to disarmament efforts, are facing massive unemployment. In other words, it should be determined on a case-by-case basis how such units might make the transition from the army to the formal economy.

Qatar

[Original: Arabic]
[29 April 2002]

The proposal of the State of Qatar for the implementation of the action programme adopted at the

International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development is as follows:

(a) Use of energy for peaceful purposes and purposes of social development;

(b) Utilization and employment of the resources available to each State to increase economic and social development;

(c) Exchange of expertise so as to promote evolution towards human development.

Notes

[1] Mr. Marco Balarezo, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations; Ms. Nancy Happe, International Monetary Fund; Mr. Reynaldo Bajraj, Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC; and Dr. Sean DiGiovanna of Rutgers University.